



LiR NEWS

NELSON AND AREA LEARNING IN RETIREMENT SOCIETY



- Brian d'Eon

Nelson's Learning in Retirement offers our 50+ community the opportunity to explore old and new interests in a relaxed and stimulating learning environment. LiR members work in partnership with Community Education and Workplace Training at Selkirk College (Nelson) to develop and provide a diverse program of speakers, courses and other activities for its members.

Website:
learninginretirementnelson.ca

Email:
nelson.lir2013@gmail.com

Facebook Group:
Learning in Retirement Nelson BC



View From The Chair

Hello, LiR Members.

It is that time of year when we return for another year of learning, playing and connecting! Although we were not “in-class” over the summer, LiR remained active - Julia, Sarah and Peter kept folks exploring the trails in our area and Jane and the Social Committee brought us together for several picnics. Thank you to you all!

This term promises amazing Friday presentations and many interesting courses. Thank you to the Program committee for continuing to pursue interesting contributors to our organization. And thank you the Tech team for enabling the work.

You may recall the theme of our Annual General Meeting in May was “Standing firm. Dreaming Big”. We asked 2 questions. Your answers were validating, supportive and challenging.

#1 - What are 2 things you value most about your membership in LiR?

- **Largely about learning**
 - Substantive learning
 - Diverse topics
 - Learning things I never would have tried
- **Largely social**
 - Camaraderie
 - Getting to know my community and meeting interesting people
 - Social routine
 - Meaningful interactions
- **Other**
 - Getting through Covid
 - Proving that “old” does not mean “mostly dead”

#2 What does an amazing LiR look like to you?

- **Membership related**
 - More engaged members; more active

volunteers

- Opportunities for intergenerational activities
- Included more physically challenged folks

- **Program related**

- More diversity in courses
- More music/creative pursuits
- Scientific advances

- **Tech related**

- Hybrid options
- Recorded Friday presentations

- **Publicity**

- More PR to other groups ie. City Council/Jubilee Manor/Lakeview
- More external involvement with community
- More input from members to LiR News

- **Other**

- **Bigger room**

• Members should be able to make/contribute ideas and suggestions for direction

- As is
- Keep doing what LiR is doing
- Continue with what we have been doing - connection, fun, socializing continued learning I want to thank you to all who participated and responded with a high level of energy! I am encouraged and inspired every time I come together with LiR folks - what an interesting and interested group of people! It is indeed a pleasure and honour to work with you! LiR is successful because of the commitment and active engagement of the members. As an organization, we are happy to welcome anyone who wishes to be part of that!

I look forward to seeing you all at our presentations, our courses and in our Interest Groups!

Jean Carne

Board and Committee Members / Presentations

BOARD MEMBERS:

Jean Carne - Chair

Susan Milner - Vice-Chair

Sarah Kemp - Secretary

Raj Downe - Treasurer

Julia Bennett, Kathy Hrabluk,

Maureen Kelsey, Jane McComb,

Christine Schmidt (Selkirk), Carl Waterer

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

COMMUNICATIONS

Julia Bennett - Chair, Aira Windtree,

Carl Waterer, Karen McDiarmid,

Bonnie Nygren

PROGRAMS

Kathy Hrabluk - Chair, Jean Carne,

Raj Downe, Jack Harrison, Sheila Hart,

Roger Oliver, Nancy Pulsifer,

Christine Schmidt, Diane Watts,

Pat Gibson, Vicki Valks, Diane Saibel

TECHNICAL

Grace Devaux, Kathy Hrabluk,

Sarah Kemp, Susan Milner, Al Pollard,

Doug Sutherland, Frances Steacy,

Christine Schmidt, Norm Watts

SOCIAL

Jane McComb - Chair,

Raj Downe,

Shirley Johnson, Gerda Liebenow,

Al Pollard, Nancy Pulsifer,

Joanne Sandkuhl, Pompea Savarin,

Katherine Gauthier

SAFETY

Carl Waterer - Chair,

Joanne Sandkuhl, Jean Carne, Verle Miller

FINANCE

Raj Downe - Chair, Jean Carne,

Kathy Hrabluk, Joanne Sandkuhl

ARCHIVES

Judy Deon - Chair, Susan Milner

MEMBERSHIP

Maureen Kelsey



Cuba - People and Music

At the end of January, Bruce La Croix presented us with a look at Cuba behind the facade of the all-inclusive hotel. As we listened to the familiar sounds of Cuban musicians we enjoyed the photographs Bruce had taken during many sojourns in the country. We encountered the fun, laughter and way of life of the locals in towns and villages away from the common tourist haunts.



Ukrainian Refugees

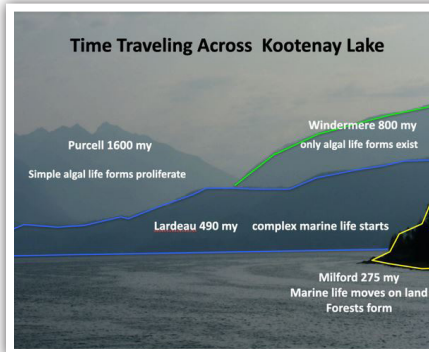
Tanya Finley received a standing ovation after a moving account of how she with family and friends raised funds to bring a family from Ukraine via Germany, to Nelson. They lived with Tanya until they found housing, jobs and the boys started school. An inspirational story of courageous and caring people.

Friday Presentations and Courses



Mountain Adventures

Long time members of LiR, Ron Robinson and Jo Sandkuhl shared their memories of their 2007 hike of the Haute Route, from Chamonix to Zermott and a 1975 ski traverse of the Northern Rockies, from Jasper to the Columbia Icefield.



Geology of Nelson to the Kootenay Lake area

Chris Zincan, a retired geologist, gave us fascinating insights in March, about the timeline of when and also how our local mountains were formed. This term Chris has gone into more detail in his course on the same subject.

A Taste Of Nelson

A Taste of Nelson, arranged by Diane Watts and Kathy Hrabluk, was a delightful tour of locally owned Nelson businesses. 9 of us met on Baker St. visiting 3 businesses during each of the 3 sessions. We learned so much from the knowledgeable, well-spoken entrepreneurs who were extremely generous with their time. Each business was unique, from the Potorium, selling Cannabis with fascinating names such as Blue Iguana and Acapulco Gold, to the Mountain Refillery, a non-profit coop marketing earth-friendly products, many in refillable containers. We watched hats emerge from patterns at Lillie and Coho and were taken on a tour of the bakery kitchens at The Kootenay Baker. I left Notably Books with a 'blind date with a book', title unknown, tucked under my arm. We visited Studio 88, a fine arts and music school, in the renovated YMCA building, The Craft Connection, marketing stunning local handcrafts, Pixie Candy, selling candy from



around the world, and Nelson Stitch Lab, not only offering fabric but giving sewing classes and camps for all ages.

I enjoyed the camaraderie of the group and was sorry when the class ended. I hope Diane and Kathy arrange a future class. If they do, I will be the first to register.

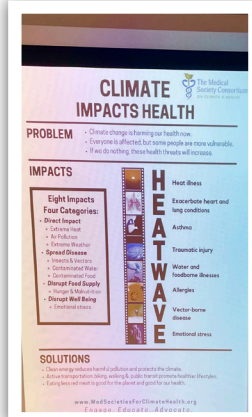
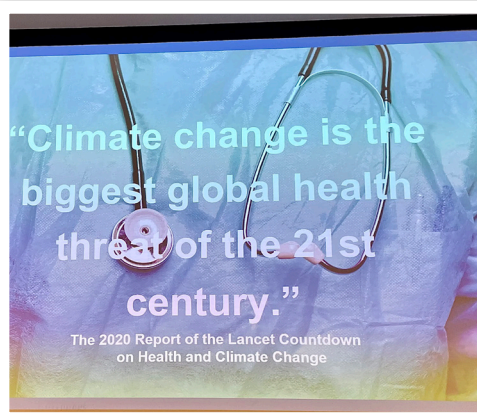
by Bonnie Nygren

Friday Presentations and Courses



Art and Design

Jane Merks and Peter Bartl discussed their individual takes on the differences between Art and Design and asked, “Are there any?” After showing us examples of each we were left to make our own decision!



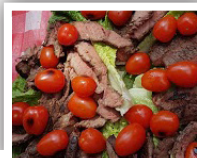
Climate and Health

Judith Fearing gave us a very realistic yet hopeful view of the current situation concerning global health in our rapidly changing world. In group discussions we were able to come up with changes small or large, where we might individually contribute towards a better environment.



Barbecue Your Own Lunch

Al Pollard generously gave his time and expertise teaching classes on barbecuing at his property in Procter.



Courses



Iona's World

Enthusiastic fans read the first two novels in the series written by Iona Wishaw about the life and times of the residents of Nelson and Queen's Bay, in the middle of the last century. Armed with facts found in the Archives of the Nelson Museum the group went on a field trip to the area where Wishaw's characters presumably lived. A lunch at Ainsworth Hot Springs rounded off the happy outing.



A new group is beginning the adventure this semester



Pine Needle Basketry

There was a robust sign-up for this afternoon of learning how to weave needles from Ponderosa pines. Two very patient but passionate instructors, Debbie Gerrits and Maureen Gallinger, brought in their baskets seen on the tables here.. As you can see, those completed by class members were very much smaller!

LiR Eldercare Scholarship

Since 2018, when Learning in Retirement awarded its first annual scholarship to support students in the Selkirk College Health Care Assistant Program, we have been heartened to see this program grow and continue to support students. Thank you.

Last year two students received a scholarship for \$500 each and we will soon have more information to share about them and their career aspirations. Their heartfelt thanks remind us that even small, incremental steps can have a lasting influence on the direction of someone's life.

To enhance the monetary value of the scholarship the Board has agreed to match funds directed to the Eldercare Scholarship up to \$2000 and aim to increase each scholarship to \$1000.

Please keep this worthwhile initiative in your thoughts; this is an accomplishment of which all members can be proud.

To make a gift to the LIR Eldercare Scholarship, you can donate online or by cheque. Please note that Sel-

kirk College likes to have funds in place for the start of the application period, which will be **Feb 15, 2024**.

[Giving Online](#)

1. Visit www.selkirk.ca/support and click "Donate Now."
2. Once the donation form loads, select your donation amount. Select "Other" as the designation and type "LIR Eldercare Scholarship" in the comment box.
3. Complete your billing information to complete the donation.
4. You will receive an automated tax receipt via email directly after making your donation.

[Giving by Cheque](#)

1. Write a cheque payable to "Selkirk College Foundation" and write "LIR Eldercare Scholarship" in the memo line.
2. Mail the cheque to: Attn: Advancement, Selkirk College, 820 Tenth Street, Nelson, BC V1L 3C7.
3. You will receive a tax receipt via mail within a few weeks after making your donation.



WHY SELKIRK - PROGRAMS & COURSES - APPLY & REGISTER - TUITION & FINANCIAL AID - STUDENT LIFE & SUPPORT - INTERNATIONAL

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Learning in Retirement

LiR Membership

LiR Eldercare Scholarship

LiR Eldercare Scholarship

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To make a gift to the LIR Eldercare Scholarship, you can donate online or by cheque.



August picnic



Hiking

Thank you and Farewell



Birthe Achtner and LIR

by Patrick Quinn-Young

The first time I met Birthe Achtner, she brought in a tray of coffee and muffins to Gerhard's office in their lovely log house on Nelson's north shore. Gerhard, her architect husband, had designed the house my family would soon construct in the Redfish area.

Birthe and I talked. In 1958 she had immigrated from Denmark to Vancouver where she worked in a medical field, before moving to the young Vancouver film industry. There she became a much sought after costume designer before her family moved to Nelson in 1991. She described their decision to move to Nelson as the best one they ever made. True to her interests, she became actively involved in the Nelson community, including the SOS campaign to maintain services at Kootenay Lake Hospital, and the campaign to keep open the Civic Theatre. I learned she was a member of MENSAs, which explained the large number of books she had on every possible subject it seemed. She brought up the subject of starting a lifelong learning group in Nelson.

Sometime later, I was talking to my friend and neighbour Roger Oliver. He also suggested a local learning group based on U3A (University of the Third Age - there is a U3A group in more than 1000 communities in the UK).

A few years later, the Nelson Daily News published a Letter to the Editor from Birthe seeking volunteers to work on the creation of a learning group for older people.

Roger was the only person to respond. Birthe and Roger met, worked together and recruited a talented team which led LIR for the first two years under Birthe's leadership.

After four preliminary meetings at the Vienna Cafe, (where I took the minutes), the first public meeting of 24 individuals was held in the basement of the Nelson Public Library. There, Learning in Retirement was born.

Later, Birthe, ever creative and practical came up with the idea of an LIR scholarship for a student in the Elder Care Aide Program at Selkirk College. This was facilitated later by the LiR Board and is awarded every year to a deserving student. Members of LIR contribute to the fund on a regular basis. Now in memory of our founder, Birthe, it is up to the members of LIR to keep it going.



Marjorie Laisnez

by Karen McDiarmid

The first thing you would notice about Marjorie was her lovely warm smile. She had a personality to match.

After retiring from nursing, Marjorie moved to Nelson to be near her daughter, adored grandchildren and grand-dog Kobe. She trained and worked as a nurse and loved reminiscing about her eight years working in Arviat, Nunavut.

She was excited to join LiR and before too long was a mainstay of the Social Committee, later becoming the chair of that committee and a valued member of the board of directors.

With her nursing background she was instrumental in the initial planning and implementation of the Safety Committee where she served for several years.

Being an adoptee was a great part of Marjorie's life and she was delighted when she was able to meet her birth family. Growing up as an only child she truly valued her new found siblings and their families.

Marjorie enjoyed the Interest Groups and joined the book club, the knitters group, the walking group and enlivened them all with her warmth and wit.

Thank you and Farewell



In Memory of Phyllis Dale by Grace Devaux

From sitting on the first Board of Learning in Retirement to participating in the Zoom presentations during Covid, Phyllis Dale will be fondly remembered for her love of lifelong learning. She immigrated from England, raised her family in Calgary, then settled in her lovely home just outside of Nelson. On May 16th, 2023 after ninety years of living she said her final goodbye.

On April 2019 Phyllis was bestowed an Honorary Lifetime Membership recognizing the ten years that she dedicated her services to Learning in Retirement. It was at the second meeting of LIR that she stepped up, became a member of the first LIR Board and volunteered to work on the Program Committee. For five years she was responsible for bringing in various speakers mostly centered around health for the Friday sessions. She also facilitated sessions on current affairs.

Roger Oliver and Judy Biggin who worked with Phyllis on programming in the early years of LIR had so much respect and admiration of Phyllis's ability to quietly and calmly resolve issues, and sort out problems that arose in any discussion. Roger chuckles and says, "She helped me out of tight spots a few times." Phyllis was highly respected by everyone. We were fortunate to have her wisdom and dedication to build a solid foundation for LIR.

The last five years she sat on the Communications Committee as editor for the Journal.

"We were always happy to have Phyllis as our editor when we were working on the LiR newsletter. Her efficient, no nonsense approach to both deadlines and her craft made it so easy to work with her. Her sense of humor quiet but effective, kept us all in line! (Jane Marks and Peter Bartl)

I was lucky to have worked with Phyllis when I chaired the Communications Committee from September 2015 to the ten year celebration in 2019. She served as an editor for fourteen publications efficiently and effectively. Her contributions were thoughtful and always kept us directed to the vision of LIR. As

I thumb through all the Journals produced, almost every issue has an interesting article that Phyllis had submitted. She was an avid supporter of our involvement in the Senior's Fair. We may all have great ideas but Phyllis followed through quietly. For example I noticed that she had brought in a couple of residents from a senior's facility so they could attend one of our Friday sessions. She was an inspiration, had a ready smile and will be dearly missed."

Gloria Currie also remembers her friend

What can I tell you of Phyllis that comes in words? It was a 25 year in depth relationship, commonly called a friendship. Her outgoing personality and worldly accomplishments took second place to her spiritual journey. If she was right in her beliefs – and how we delved and argued – she is sitting on my sofa right now, attentive, as I struggle to describe her! She and I were only a year apart in age. In the last year we spoke of our readiness to "move on".

She chose M.A.I.D. with friends and family attending. " She never lost her dry humor. Her last words were, "See you soon, Gloria." It took a moment for all of us to get it before we exploded into laughter.



Phyllis enjoying a summer social at Lakeside Park



After a Friday presentation lunch in the cafeteria

Interest Groups

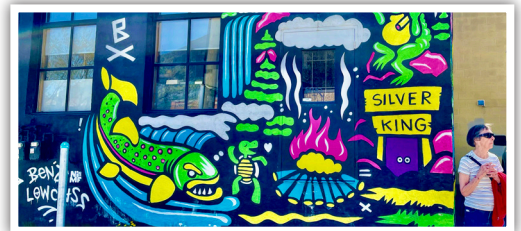
Susan Milner lir22social@gmail.com

Would you like to find a group of people with whom to discuss books or movies, or meet for lunch? Interest groups are informal collections of LiR members who share an interest. These aren't courses or presentations, just a way to get together for some fun. LiR's role is to put people in touch with each other, a bit like a dating service!

Currently there are seven active interest groups: two walking groups of different levels, a book group, a film group, a bridge club, a group devoted to logic puzzles and a group who enjoy visiting local hot springs. Also, the snowshoers plan to hit the trails once the snow flies and there have been inquiries about forming skiing groups, both cross-country and downhill. You will find lists of active and suggested groups on our website (learninretirementnelson.ca). We try to keep the list up to date, based on information from our members. If you see something that appeals to you -- or if you have an idea for another interest group -- all you need to do is contact me at lir22social@gmail.com.

If there is an existing interest group, I'll pass on your contact information to the communicator for the group, who will let you know about meeting times and places. If there is no existing group, I'll arrange to have the suggestion posted on LiR's website so that other members can see it. Hopefully, there will soon be some people with whom to share your interest.





Art in Rural Communities

A whirlwind landed in our Friday gathering in the person of Sydney Black. With boundless enthusiasm she proceeded to share with us the creation and development of the Nelson International Mural Festival. What started as a small idea to revitalize the alley ways of downtown Nelson has grown into one of the most successful arts festivals in North America – all in the space of 5 years! And Sydney Black has been at the center of it all as co-founder of the Festival.

Each year dozens of muralists apply. A jury system, including the owner of the designated wall selects the successful artist. The design is then agreed on by the owner and artist. We learned that artists as far away as New York and Australia have created visions of beauty on our walls.

We learned about the development of the concept, the creation of an organizational structure, the engagement of business and building owners and the chal-

lenge of funding such a large event. The Festival is now sponsored by The Nelson District Arts Council as well as many local and national organizations.

As Sydney once said, “All art is valid.” You will see her reflected in the Festival activities, which include artist panels, workshops, music, dance, street theatre and valued Indigenous community’s presentations. And it’s all free for you to enjoy!

Sydney is also the founder of Black Productions, which has brought us over a dozen Broadway Musicals.

Thank you to Sydney Black for enriching Nelson’s artistic culture in so many amazing ways.

Info on Festival: ndac.ca/nelson-international-mural-festival

Info on Sydney Black: <https://thenelsondaily.com/dose/nelson%e2%80%99s-arts-and-culture-hero-sydney-black>

Aira Windtree



A Murals Field Trip

Sydney Black, Founder of the International Mural Festival gave a talk in March, then in May, led a fascinating field trip around Nelson viewing the murals we walk past every day, perhaps without a second glance. Hearing the context surrounding each mural added a poignancy to the works and gave us an appreciation of the planning and skills, both on the wall and behind the scenes. Sydney is also E.D. of Nelson and District Arts Council.



The Social Committee put on some fabulous picnics for us at lakeside this summer.



Acrylic Painting with Pat McGooley




Your voice matters

Mayor Janice Morrison was our recent Friday guest speaker. One of the concerns raised was the challenge for seniors to safely navigate the streets and byways.

The City will be developing an Accessibility & Inclusion Committee comprised of members from the public in the coming months. From the city: ..**Your Voice Matters:** We value your insights! We invite all residents to actively participate in shaping the accessibility landscape in Nelson. Share your experiences, challenges, and suggestions to help us create a truly inclusive environment."

For information: accessibility@nelson.ca

Also check out nelson.ca/activetransportationplan



If you have any ideas for Field Trips
or would like to help with leading one,
please contact Susan Milner at
lirsocial22@gmail.com



For current information
anytime go to our website

learninginretirementnelson.ca